

Facility: Junee Correctional Centre  
Media: Gundagai Independent, Gundagai NSW  
Published Date: 19 September 2013

# Inmate's art gifted to Gundagai

Two captivating pieces of art depicting the capture of bushranger Captain Moonlite and created by inmates at the Junee Correctional Centre, will soon have a new home in the Visitor Information Centre after the centre's Office Manager Wendy Elphick travelled to Junee to take possession of the works at an exhibition held at the centre last Friday.

Junee Correctional Centre's Cultural Advisor Gerome Brodin said last Friday's Asian Moon Harvest Festival exhibition went well, with the inmates taking pride in their displayed work that will now be housed in one of Gundagai's busiest tourist spots.

"Over a period of four weeks, two of the inmates created two artworks based on the Captain Moonlite theme for the Shire of Gundagai to go on permanent exhibition in the town," Mr Brodin said.

"This isn't the first time that the inmates have been asked to donate their work for a specific exhibition, but it is the first time that their works will be donated to a community for visitors and the locals to enjoy."

Mr Brodin said that the initiative gave the inmates an opportunity to give something back to the community, as well as helping to create a sense of being able to use their time productively while in the prison.

"They are very proud of what they have achieved through this and are really wanting to create more works," he said.

"Word is getting out and other

charities are starting to contact us asking for more pieces to be done which we're really happy about."

Mrs Elphick said she found the morning spent at the correctional centre to be very informative, adding that the initiative highlights a positive side of the inmate's incarceration.

"The exhibition was held in the gymnasium where there was wall to wall paintings," she said. "The art work was unbelievable."

"One of the artist's who helped to create the Moonlite pieces told me that he had done 106 paintings so far.

"There were lots of different themes attached to the paintings – Black Caviar, the Sydney Harbour Bridge, lots of portraits and lots of work just depicting Australian life. It was wonderful."

The Visitor Information Centre was approached earlier in the year by Offender Services Manager Trevor Coles, in relation to a few of the inmates taking an interest in the Captain Moonlite story and wanting to produce some art in line with that theme.

"Trevor Coles phoned us and said the inmates would like to do the paintings of Moonlite and asked if we would be interested in taking them," Mrs Elphick said.

"One painting is a portrait of the Military Police that captured Captain Moonlite and the other is a scene depicting the siege and eventual capture of Moonlite. They were painted from pictures the inmates found in books.

"On the day, the management of the jail were very interested in our Captain Moonlite and the his-

tory of how his remains came to be buried in Gundagai."

Mrs Elphick said she accepted the art works on behalf of Gundagai Shire Council and the public will first get to view the paintings when they will be used at the launch of Gundagai's contribution to the Gold Trails in the not too distant future.

"The first phase of the gold trail launch will include Captain Moonlite's grave, along with the graves of Sergeant Parry and Constable Webb-Bowen.

"Phase Two will go on to take in the Court House, the Old Gaol and the Museum."

Mrs Elphick said she envisions that the art work will be loaned to

the Old Gundagai Gaol at some stage in the future, so that a public exhibition of the paintings could be held, possibly in conjunction with works created by local artists.

"We are also forming a partnership with the Junee Correctional Centre so that the inmates can do some more promotional works for Gundagai," she said.



**Created by inmates at the Junee Correctional Centre, this art work based on Captain Moonlite will soon be displayed at the Visitor Information Centre as part of the Gundagai Gold Trails launch.**